



MONTHLY REPORT

November 2025

SOIL
&
WATER



SIMPSONVILLE ELEMENTARY STUDENTS MAKE THEIR OWN THUNDER



Preschool-aged children at Simpsonville Elementary learned about water and its impact on the environment during a lesson facilitated by the district's Stormwater Programs Coordinator Kendall Juell. Students learned that water is found in all living things and all seasons, and that although thunderstorms can be frightening, farmers rely on the rain to help grow their crops. Sometimes, too much rain can wash things away from the farm.

To reinforce the sounds of a thunderstorm and make learning fun, Juell encouraged the children to stomp their feet to mimic the sound of thunder.

EDIBLE PARFAITS MAKE SCIENCE FUN WHILE TEACHING ABOUT SOIL

For an engaging way to teach kids about the five soil layers and their importance to supporting life and preventing erosion, Stormwater Programs Co-



ordinator Kendall Juell led students at Brutontown Community Center and Slater Hall Community Center through a demo to create edible soil parfaits.



Students colored a soil profile, identified soil horizons and enjoyed a tasty treat complete with gummy worms, pudding, corn flakes and cookie crumbs.



EVENT CHALLENGES VISITORS TO IMAGINE A DAY WITHOUT WATER

Stormwater Programs Coordinator Kendall Juell attended the annual Imagine a Day Without Water partnership event with ReWa, Greenville Water, and MetroConnects at Roper Mountain Science Center.

Guests learned about stormwater pollution via the district's Defend Your Drain game, listened to the sounds of a rain stick, colored a water drop with a way to conserve water, and took home several water stewardship campaign materials.



CHALLENGE YOURSELF TO FOLLOW THE FIVE-ITEM RULE



One of the simplest ways to make sustainability stick is to follow the **Five-Item Rule**—a weekly habit that keeps green living manageable and motivating.

Instead of overhauling your lifestyle all at once, choose **five everyday items** you rely on—like paper towels, plastic produce bags, bottled shampoo or single-use coffee cups—and commit to **replacing, reducing or eliminating** them for

just that week. Here are some ideas:

- Use hand towels before paper towels.
- Carry a reusable cup.
- Try a shampoo bar instead of using a shampoo bottle.
- At the market, go bagless for certain items or use mesh bags.
- Commit to using up leftovers before cooking a new meal.



The beauty of the Five-Item Rule is that it turns sustainable living into bite-sized wins that build over time, helping small shifts accumulate into meaningful impact without feeling overwhelming.

GET IN ON THE BUZZ ABOUT SAVING NATIVE BEES

The district's education team, Olivia Reed and Kendall Juell, attended a course on native bees through the Clemson SC Botanical Garden. It was taught by Sue Watts, who informed participants of common native bees found in backyard gardens, nesting habits and how to support bees in their springtime and over-wintering journeys.



Watts spoke about the importance of native bees to our environment, and how they often are better and healthier for native plants and ecosystems than the imported honeybees.

HOW CAN YOU HELP NATIVE BEES?

- Plant natives to provide food for bees, such as coneflowers, goldenrods, black-eyed Susans and asters.
- Leave your leaves on the ground to provide nesting habitat for them.
- Reduce pesticide and herbicide use.

Not only do these actions help native bees, but they can also improve biodiversity and improve water quality in your area by reducing the amount of pesticide/herbicide run-off into streams.

ARE YOU READY TO EMBRACE REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE?



**NATIONAL
WILDLIFE
FEDERATION**

At a training facilitated by the National Wildlife Federation, District Programs Co-

ordinator Olivia Reed learned about the psychology of “innovators” and “early adopters” and how they respond differently than “middle adopters” as it relates to regenerative agriculture. Early adopters are typically more receptive than middle adopters when it comes to trying new programs and techniques.

HOW WOULD YOU CATEGORIZE YOURSELF?

Be an innovator! Start your own compost pile. Replace synthetic fertilizer or pesticide in your garden with natural, organic ones.

If these ideas sound helpful to you, reach out to GCSWCD or NRCS to learn more!



BOTANIST LECTURES ON NATIVE AMERICAN VIEWS ON THE ENVIRONMENT

District Programs Coordinator Olivia Reed and Stormwater Programs Coordinator Kendall Juell attended a lecture by Robin Wall Kimmerer, author of *Braiding Sweetgrass*, *The Serviceberry* and *Gathering Moss*, at Furman University. The Potawatomi botanist shared about the notion of “self” being extended to include nature, land and community instead of just us, and humility as a solution to selfishness.



Robin Wall Kimmerer

Kimmerer, who also serves as the director of the Center for Native Peoples and the Environment at the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry, encouraged young people to take small steps toward conservation and to consider conservation careers.

For ideas on how to start small, check out this month's “**Conservation Corner**” on page 2. Learn more about the **Five-Item Rule** and how you can incorporate bite-sized wins that set you on a course to making a difference on the environment!

RESTORING SOIL AND THE ENVIRONMENT THROUGH NATIVE PLANTS

The district's education duo attended a Sustainable Landscaping course offered by the SC Native Plant Society at Clemson University. Led by Rick Huffman, founder of the SCNPS and an accomplished landscape architect, the course covered the benefits of native plants on the environment and SC's changing landscape, including habitat loss from climate change and human activities.

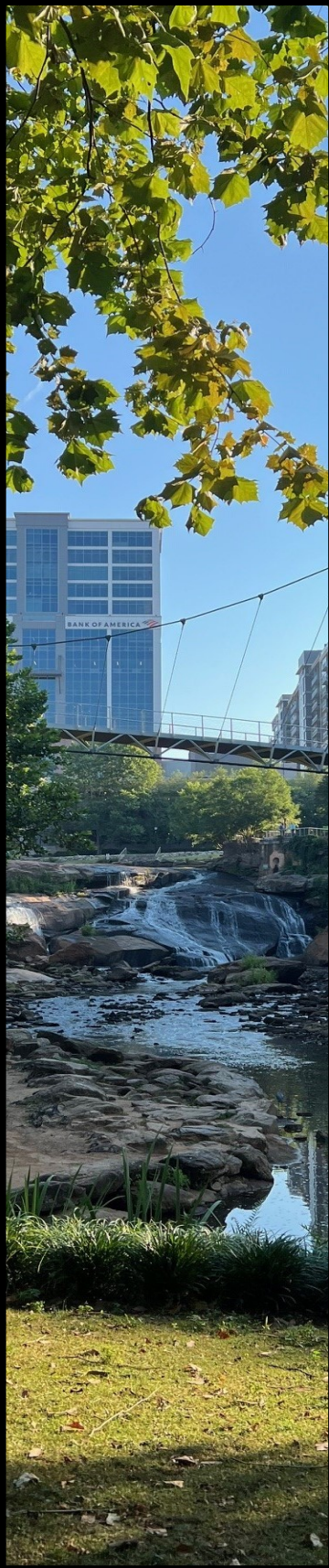


Huffman explained the benefits of landscaping using native plants, and how it helps restore soil and environment while improving stability and longevity. The team came away with additional information on how native plants can form an effective riparian buffer, which can have unintended benefits. For example, a riparian buffer around a pond can prevent geese from grazing around the pond and polluting water with their poop and generally causing a mess, in addition

to filtering stormwater and slowing runoff. If you have a pond or stream on your property with geese or other issues, try a riparian buffer.

COMPONENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE RIPARIAN BUFFER:

- **Inner zone:** Trap debris and slow runoff using trees and shrubs adjacent to the water.
- **Middle zone:** Increase infiltration and a wider buffer using a mix of trees and shrubs.
- **Outer zone:** Intercept runoff and filter sediment using a composition of grasses and forbs.
- **Woody debris:** Provide habitat and slow water flow using fallen trees and woody debris.



>>> STORMWATER

- Responded to **citizen questions** about stormwater issues, stormwater harvesting, rain barrels and soil testing
- GCSWCD websites had **1,794 page views** this month.
- Soil and Water staff continues to support the Reedy River Water Quality Group by serving on the Public Outreach Committee. **RRWQG websites CleanReedy.org and ReedyReportCard.org, are maintained by Soil and Water staff.**

>>> ENGINEERING

- Responded to **10 citizen requests** for drainage, flooding, erosion and sink-holes technical advice
- **The streambank stabilization project**, a partnership program with the NRCS, is offered through the EQIP program. The deadline is Jan. 15.

>>> AGRICULTURE / FOOD SECURITY

- Continued **Seed Library** partnership with the Greenville Library, providing free vegetable seeds to Greenville residents as a vector to give information about insecticides, herbicides and fertilizers
- Made **no-till drill, a roller crimper and soil penetrometer available** to county farmers

>>> SOCIAL MEDIA

Stormwater	Total posts	Followers	Follower growth	Impressions
Facebook	9	2,155	0	1835
Instagram	9	1,436	+13	2035
RRWQG				
Facebook	1	591	0	131
Instagram	1	197	+1	140
GCSWCD Websites	Total views			
	1794			
RRWQG Website	Total views			
	380			

>>> INTERDEPARTMENTAL SUPPORT

- Litter Ends Here
- Keep Greenville County Beautiful